

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN

—  
S.P. 440 - L.D. 1235

**Resolve, To Strengthen Standards-based Diplomas**

**Sec. 1. Maine Proficiency Education Council created. Resolved:** That the Maine Proficiency Education Council, referred to in this section as "the council," is created to make recommendations regarding implementation of the proficiency-based graduation requirements under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 4722-A to the Commissioner of Education and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

**1. Members.** The council consists of the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee and the following 14 members, appointed by the Commissioner of Education:

- A. A member of the State Board of Education, nominated by the state board;
- B. Four public school teachers, at least one of whom is a special education teacher, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Education Association;
- C. Two public school administrators, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Principals' Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association;
- D. Two members of school boards, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine School Boards Association;
- E. One faculty member representing the University of Maine;
- F. Two members of the business community; and
- G. Two members of the general public with interest and experience in education.

The council must be cochaired by the Commissioner of Education and one other member elected by the council. The council may establish subcommittees and may appoint persons who are not members of the council to serve on the subcommittees as needed to conduct the council's work.

**2. Duties.** The council shall study and provide recommendations for implementing proficiency-based graduation requirements leading to a diploma consistent with the requirements of Title 20-A, section 4722-A. The council shall:

- A. Fully investigate and understand the current status of standards-based educational systems and proficiency-based graduation requirements in all of Maine's public high schools;
- B. Review proficiency-based graduation requirements to ensure that the requirements protect the rights of all students, including but not limited to special education and English language learners, to receive a high school diploma;
- C. Outline the key concerns with the development and implementation of proficiency-based graduation requirements and provide solutions, where possible, for the challenges schools face in developing standards-based educational systems and implementing requirements for awarding proficiency-based diplomas;
- D. Recommend a 5-year plan for full implementation of proficiency-based graduation requirements across the State, including, but not limited to, the resources and support necessary to develop proficiency-based graduation requirements in all of the State's public high schools, professional development systems for educators, data systems to track student proficiency information and appropriate communication tools for parents and students;
- E. Recommend best practices for adoption and implementation of standards-based educational systems and proficiency-based graduation requirements based upon the current experiences of schools that meet the criteria for proficiency-based graduation and other research and data; and
- F. Recommend assessment practices other than standardized or other commercially available testing to assess student proficiency in academic areas.

**3. Report.** The Commissioner of Education shall submit a report regarding the work of the council to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than January 1, 2016. The report must include the council's recommendations regarding implementation of the requirements set forth in Title 20-A, section 4722-A and recommendations regarding the continuing work of the council.

**4. Staff assistance; grant funding.** The Department of Education shall provide staff assistance to the council. The department may seek and employ grant funds to provide additional assistance.

**5. Council continuation.** The council is authorized to continue meeting, if it so desires, 90 days after adjournment of the Second Regular Session of the 127th Legislature.